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CURRENT SUPPORT BRIEF

DEMOBILIZATIONS AND THE GROWTH OF CIVILIAN
EMPLOYMENT IN THE USSR

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DEMobilIZATIONS AND THE GROWTH OF CIVILIAN
EMPLOYMENT IN THE USSR

The suspension of demobilizations in the USSR announced by Khrushchev on 9 July 1/ halted a windfall of labor which had been a major factor in the rapid expansion of the civilian labor force during 1955-60--years when the low birth rates of World War II might otherwise have retarded the growth of civilian employment. An even greater number of extra workers, however, was obtained during those years by inducing a larger percentage of housewives and teenagers to take full-time jobs. The failure to demobilize an additional 600,000 men in 1961 probably will result in intensified efforts to recruit even more of these non-working elements into the labor force during 1961-65.

The demobilization plan announced in January 1960 called for a reduction of Soviet armed manpower from 3,623,000 to 2,423,000 in 1960 and 1961. It is believed that the reductions have been about half completed.

Trends in Population and Employment, 1950-60

The population 14 years of age and over in the USSR increased by 13.9 million between 1950 and 1955, while civilian employment increased by only 6.0 million. During the following five-year period, however, the population increased by only 4.4 million, while civilian employment increased by 11.3 million. The slow growth of civilian employment early in the decade, despite the rapid population growth, resulted from (1) an expansion in high school enrollment, (2) the buildup in the armed forces, and (3) a decline in the proportion of women holding jobs. All of these trends were reversed after 1955, as civilian labor force participation rates increased sharply. The proportion of men 14 years of age and over in the civilian labor force, which had declined from 72 percent in 1950 to 70 percent in 1955, rose to 78 percent in 1960. Similarly, the proportion of women in the labor force declined from 64 percent in 1950 to 62 percent in 1955, but rose to 66 percent in 1960.

These sharp increases in participation rates after 1955 resulted from the transfer of demobilized servicemen into the civilian labor force and from the employment of greater percentages of housewives and teenagers. Of the 11.3 million increase in civilian employment between 1955 and 1960, about 3.1 million resulted from population growth, 2.5 million from demobilizations, and the remaining 5.7 million from the higher participation rates of adult women and teenagers. To make it easier for housewives to take jobs during those years, the government increased the number of nurseries and introduced the "extended-day" system into many elementary schools. The number of teenagers available for jobs increased as high school graduations rose sharply while admissions to colleges remained virtually unchanged. At the same time, the total enrollment in high schools declined even more rapidly than the population of high school age, which in those years was influenced by the low birth rates of World War II. Finally, a larger proportion of the admissions to tekhnikums and VUZes consisted of persons who continued to work full time while studying at evening or correspondence schools.

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Prospects for 1961-65

If participation rates remain at 1960 levels, civilian employment will increase by only 1.5 million in 1961 and 1962, 1.8 million in 1963, and 2.1 million in 1964 and 1965. These amounts are considerably below the average annual increase in civilian employment between 1955 and 1960--2.3 million. The originally planned demobilization of about 600,000 men during 1961 would have contributed most of the additional workers needed this year to match the employment increases of earlier years. With demobilizations suspended, the USSR will have to obtain all of the extra workers elsewhere if the increments to civilian employment are not to drop sharply.

Despite the sharp increase in the proportion of the population employed since 1955, the USSR apparently is confident that labor reserves still exist and can be drawn upon if necessary to meet plan goals. Some of the results of the 1959 census of population, shown in Table 1, indicate the nature of such reserves. The number of persons in the key working ages without job attachments in January 1959 was 22.0 million, of which 12.8 million were neither full-time students nor invalids. The 7 million mothers of children under 14 are the prime targets of the continuing drive to induce more housewives into the labor force by providing more child-care facilities. The remaining 1.4 million men and 4.4 million women who were not working are among the targets of the latest crop of anti-parasite laws, which in the RSFSR provide for compulsory labor in exile for persons convicted of employment in illegal activities, such as black-marketing and private enterprise, as well as for those who refuse "socially useful" labor. 2/ The 5.8 million students over 16 years of age, classified as part of the non-working population, also represent a potential source of extra workers. Although the Seven-Year Plan calls for an increase in high school enrollment by 1965, enrollment actually declined between 1958 and 1960, despite an increasing population of high school age. Presumably the planned expansion in enrollment could be delayed further until the need for labor is less acute. A resolution passed by the USSR Council of Ministers in June 1961 ordered the union republics to develop detailed plans for the training of students in the newly-formed labor-polytechnical high schools and to integrate these plans with the over-all economic plans. 3/ The resolution thus implies that a quota system now may be used in admitting students to the high schools, similar to that long used in the *teknikums* and higher educational institutions.

According to the 1961 mid-year economic report, nonagricultural employment increased by 3.2 million between mid-1960 and mid-1961. 4/ Although some decline in farm employment may have offset this gain, total civilian employment apparently increased faster than expected from population growth alone. At least until mid-1961, therefore, the Soviet civilian labor force was still increasing rapidly and participation rates had risen even more rapidly.

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TABLE 1

Employment Status of Persons
in the Principal Working Ages
(Men, 16-59 and Women, 16-54)
15 January 1959 a/

| | Millions |
|---|----------|
| Total Population in Principal Working Ages | 119.8 |
| Employed Persons in these Ages | 97.8 |
| In State Establishments or Collective Farms | 89.1 |
| In Private Farm Economy | 5.1 |
| In Armed Forces | 3.6 |
| Not Employed | 22.0 |
| Full-Time Students | 5.8 |
| Invalids | 3.3 |
| Able-Bodied Men, 16-59 | 1.4 |
| Able-Bodied Women, 16-54 | 11.4 |
| With Children 0-6 Years | 5.1 |
| With Children 7-13 Years | 1.9 |
| With Children over 13, or Childless | 4.4 |
| Status Not Reported | 0.1 |
| a. 4/ | |

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Analyst:

Coord:

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Sources:

1. [REDACTED]
2. Pravda, 5 May 61. U.
3. Trud, 8 Jun 61. U.
4. Sotsialisticheskiy Trud, No. 2, 1961, pp. 13-15. U.

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